

8

A
S E R M O N

Preached in the Parish Church of

St. Margarets Westminster,

Upon *Sunday*, *January* the 8th, 170⁹₁₀.

Being the Day of the Yearly Collection for the
Poor Children of the *Gray-Coat Hospital*.

By the Right Reverend Father in God, WILLIAM,
Lord Bishop of *Lincoln*.

*Published at the Request of the Vice-President, in the
Name of the Governours of the said Hospital, and
Many Others of the Parish.*

L O N D O N,
Printed for RICHARD SARE, at *Grays-Inn-Gate* in
Holborn, MDCCX.

Wm
R. W.

SEERMON

Preached in the Parish Church of

St. Andrew, Westminster.

Upon Sunday, January the 8th, 1702.

Being the Day of the Yearly Collection for the
Poor Children of the Grey Coat Hospital.

By the Right Reverend Father in God, WILLIAM
Lord Bishop of London.



Published at the Request of the Vice-Chancellor, in the
Name of the Governors of the said Hospital, and
Many Others of the Parish.

LONDON:
Printed for RICHARD SARE, at Grey-Coat-Gate in
Holborn, MDCCX.

I TIMOTHY VI. 18.

That They Do Good ; that they be Rich in Good Works ; Ready to Distribute ; Willing to Communicate.

THE Words are part of that *Charge*, which St. Paul commanded *Timothy* to give to *Them that are Rich in this World*, v. 17.

The City of *Ephesus*, like all other great and populous Cities, abounded with Many of *These*; and the *Advice* was such as if well Received, and duly Observed by them, would prove no less useful to Themselves, than Advantagious to Others.

There is Something in the *Riches of this World* so contrary to the *Spirit of Christianity*; so apt to take off Mens Hearts and Affections from their Duty, and to run Them into a thousand Vanities and Follies utterly Destructive of all true Piety; that our *Saviour* seems sometimes to represent Those Men as almost *Uncapable* of being *His Disciples* who have any large Superfluity of Them. Pride, Covetousness, Sensuality, Oppression; and an innumerable Train of Other irregular Lusts, and Vices, commonly follow the Possession of Them: And hard it is for any one to abound in a plentiful Enjoyment of the Good Things of this World, without being proportionably Poor and Destitute with respect to the Other.

But what then must such Persons do to secure Themselves against this Danger; and to Sanctifie their

Mat. x. 23, 24.

Luk. xviii. 24.

Riches (which, after all, are the Gift of God, and may be employ'd to Excellent Purposes) to their more abundant Retribution in Heaven; instead of suffering them to Clog Them in their Passage, or even wholly to Close up their Way to It?

The *Answer* to this is plain, and fully deliver'd in the *Words* of my *Text*. Let them *Do Good*; Let them be *Rich in Good Works*; *Ready to Distribute*; *Willing to Communicate*: This will turn their very Temptation into a Blessing; and entitle Them to as great a Degree of Glory in the Other World, as they now enjoy of Riches, and Superfluities, in This.

But tho' this therefore be the *Charge*, of St. Paul, to *Them that are Rich in this World*, yet we are not to look upon it as belonging so peculiarly to Those, as not equally to regard, in the substance of these Duties, the *Meanest Persons*. 'Tis true Men of Moderate Fortunes cannot give so largely to the Poor as Those of Whom we are now Speaking: And Some may possibly be so very Straight, and Indigent in their Circumstances, as not to be Able to Give any thing at all. But yet still the *Former* of These may Do somewhat: They may *Give according to their Ability*; and may be Ready, and Willing, to *Give gladly of the Little which they possess*. And even the *Latter* may have a *Bountiful Heart*, tho' they cannot shew it in the Distributions of a *Bountiful Hand*. They may Wish, and Desire, that they could Abound in this Grace, as well as in Others: And God, who searches the Heart, will accept of their *Good Will*; and no less Reward Their *Charitable Mind*, than the Others *Charitable Works*.

And now that I may give some light, and offer some Encouragement, to the Practise of a Duty so Excellent

cellent in its self ; so Acceptable to God ; so profitable to Those who Fulfil it, as well as to Those who receive the Benefits of it ; I shall make it my Endeavour in the following Discourse to shew ;

I. What it was that the *Apostle* here commanded *Timothy* to Charge his *Rich Ephesians* to Do, with Relation to this Matter.

II. Upon what Grounds the *Duty* here required is Founded ; and what great Obligations lie upon All of Us to discharge it, as far as our several Circumstances Enable us to Do. Which having done, I will

III. And lastly, Offer you some *Rules* for the better direction of your *Charity* : That so this *Duty* which is in its self so Excellent, may be render'd yet more Valuable, by your Wise, and Prudent, Discharge of It.

I. Let us Consider, What it was that the *Apostle* here commanded *Timothy* to Charge his *Rich Ephesians* to Do, with Relation to this Matter.

Now That will appear from a brief Survey of the several *Phrases* of the *Text* ; which, being rightly understood, will be found to contain *Four* Summary, but comprehensive, *Rules of Charity* : The *two Former* with respect to the *Work* its-self of *Giving Alms* ; The *two Latter* with relation to that *Temper*, and *Disposition of Mind*, which ought to accompany the Giving of Them.

The *first Rule*, is General, To *Do Good* : And where *Charity* is the Subject, to *Do Good*, in the language of the *New Testament*, is but another Expression for being *Charitable*. Our *Saviour* thus taught
his

his Disciples to *ſpeak* ; and they ſoon learnt to *Write*, as well as to *Act*, after his Example.

When a certain Woman Anointed the Head of the Blessed *Jeſus* with a very precious Ointment ; and Some who diſliked the Action began to ask, *Why ſuch*
Mark xvi. 5, 6. a Waſt was made of it ? For that *this Ointment might have been ſold for more than three hundred Pence, and have been given to the Poor ;* Our Lord thus either Defended, or Excused, what She had done ; *Let Her alone, Why trouble ye Her ? She hath wrought a Good Work upon me. For ye have the Poor with you always, and whenſoever ye will ye may Do Them Good ; but Me ye have not always.* Whatever be the Meaning of that *Good Work* which this pious Woman did to our Saviour ; it cannot be doubted but that by *Doing Good* to the Poor, we muſt underſtand the *Relieving of Them* ; and that our Lord intended it as an Answer to the Exception of thoſe angry Diſciples, that ſhe ſhould rather have ſold *the Ointment*, and have given the *Price of it* to the Poor, than have poured it, as ſhe did, on *Jeſus's Head*.

It is in the ſame ſenſe that we are told of Charitable *Dorcas*, Acts ix. 36. that *She was a Woman full of Good Works, and Alms-Deeds, which ſhe did.* And to come ſtill nearer to the Expreſſion before Us ; it is in the ſame ſenſe we are to underſtand that Exhortation of our *Apoſtle* to the *Galatians*, Chap. vi. 9, 10. *Not to be weary in Well-Doing ; But as They had Opportunity to Do Good unto All Men ;* that is to be Ready to Succour, and Relieve Them.

When therefore St. *Paul* here bids *Timothy*, *Charge Them which are Rich in this World*, that they ſhould *Do Good*, his Meaning is plainly this ; that They ſhould employ their *Riches* to the Exerciſe of *Charity* ;
 and

and be the more Bountiful to those who are in Need. And if this be the true Import, as it evidently is, of *Doing Good*; it will follow

Secondly, that to be *Rich in Good Works* must denote a *Free and Liberal Exercise of this Grace*. That such Persons as we are now speaking of, should not only *Give to the Poor* out of their Abundance, but should *Give plentifully*: And as much Exceed Others in the Largeness of their Distributions, as God has been more Abundant in his Dispensations to Them, than He has been to Other Men.

And this is not only founded upon that *General Rule* of the Gospel, (the Reason of which is applicable to These, no less than to our more Spiritual Performances) that *To Whom Much is given, of Him Much shall be required*; Luk. xii. 48. but is necessarily Consequent upon the very Nature of the *Duty* its self. For if it be the *Duty* of Every Man to *Do Good*, that is to be *Charitable*; then We must either say that there is no Stated Proportion at all to be observed in our *Doing of it*, but that He who has the least, is obliged to give as bountifully as He who has the most; (which is not only unreasonable in the Supposition, but will be oftentimes found to be Impossible in Practice:) Or we must sink the Exercise of this Virtue so Low, that Every One, tho' never so Moderate in his Outward Circumstances, may be in a Capacity of discharging it to as high a Degree as any One is obliged to Do; (which would be in a good measure to Destroy the Exercise of *Charity* altogether:) Or if neither of These can be allow'd, as 'tis certain neither of Them can; then it must remain that every One ought to proportion his *Beneficence*, to his Abilities, and, in the Words of our Apostle, 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

to Give as God hath Prospered Him ; and by so doing hath enabled him to Give.

Thus far then I take the *Charge* of the *Text* to be Clear, and Certain ; that every Christian, as He has Opportunity, should be *Charitable* ; and *dispense* his *Charity* the more *Bountifully to Others*, the more plentifully it has pleased God to *dispense* his *Blessings to Him*. But because it is not sufficient to entitle Any One to the Character of a *Good Man* that He does an *Act of Charity*, unless He doth it with a *Charitable Mind* ; and God respects the *Affection* with which we Give, more than the *Quantity* of what we bestow ; Therefore

Thirldy ; The *Apostle* directs *Timothy* to *Charge* his *Rich Men* not only to *Do Good*, and to be *Rich in Good Works* ; but withal to be *Ready to Distribute* ; that is, to *Crown their Good deeds with a Suitable Disposition of Mind*, and to bring a *Liberal, and Beneficent Heart*, as well as a *Free, and Bountiful Hand*, to the *Exercise* of this Duty. For that These may be separated, is certain ; and every days Experience confirms it to us. Pride and Interest, Faction and Popularity, and a thousand Other Motives of no better a nature, sometimes procure as large a Bounty to an indigent Person as Love and Charity. Nay and even Those have been induced by these Considerations to distribute to the Poor, from whom Pity and Compassion, would not have drawn a Penny for their Relief. But this, whatever it may seem to Men, is no *Charity* in the Sight of God ; nor shall it ever be Considered, or Rewarded, as such. *Though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor*, says *St. Paul*, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. (and That is the most that any one Can do, as to the *Outward Act*, and more than any one is ordinarily Obligated to do,)

do,) yet if I have not Charity, (which therefore the Apostle supposed even Such a One might want) it profiteth me nothing.

So that to perfect this Duty there must be first a Charitable Mind; and then, if there be an Ability, there must be a suitable *beneficent Distribution* also. The Former, even without the Latter, may be true Charity, and be accepted by God as Such: For if there be first a Willing Mind, it is accepted according to That a Man Hath, and not according to That he Hath not. 2 Cor. viii. 12. But the Latter without the Former, I mean the Act without the Heart and Affection, is but like ~~the~~ Prayer without Devotion; or Fasting without Humiliation; or, in the Comparison of St. James, Chap. ii. 26. the Body without the Spirit; Dead, and Useless. It has the Shew and Appearance of a Good Work to Us who cannot search the Heart, and see the Defect of it; but to God it signifies Nothing: Who knows the Man with all his seeming Liberality to have no Charity; that is, no inward Compassion for, or Affection towards, his Neighbour.

Nay but this is not yet All: St. Paul would have Us Christians carry Our Love still Higher; and to this Readiness to Distribute add,

Fourthly, A Willingness to Communicate: Which Phrase however some confound with the foregoing Expression, as if they Both signified but One and the Same Thing; yet I take this Latter, to add still more Force, and Energy, to the Former.

The Word which the Apostle makes use of properly relates to such Persons as are Joint-Partners in a Common Stock, or Trade, and so have a mutual Interest in what belongs to it. Now the Christian Church is, you know, represented in the Holy Scriptures as a Society

of Men United together in a Sacred Bond of Fellowship with One Another. And therefore as there is a Communion of Saints resulting from hence in Other Matters, so We are told there should be such a Fellowship also in the Concerns of a Brotherly Love for, and Charity towards, One Another.

It was with relation to this Notion, that St. Paul exhorted the Romans to Communicate to the Necessity of Saints, that is, of their Fellow-Christians; Rom. xii. 13. And to pass from the Apostle's Precepts, to their Practice; it was upon this foundation that the whole Christian Church at the Beginning had *All things Common*: Act. ii. 44. They brought their Particular Estates into One Publick Treasury; from whence a Distribution was made to All, as Every One had Need. And how far the same Spirit continued in the following Ages to work after the like manner, the Histories of those times sufficiently inform us.

Here then is that extraordinary Disposition of Mind, which I conceive our Apostle design'd to recommend to us in this *Last expression*. That we should not only be, in general, of a Charitable, Free, Beneficent temper towards All men; apt to Consider the wants of Others, and Ready to Relieve Them; but, with respect to our Fellow Christians, should be Willing, or, Sociable to Communicate: Should look upon them as our Partners; Persons who have a joint Right with us to all that part of our Estates which Their Necessities call for, and our Abundance enables Us to Spare for their Relief. That we should account it not so much Charity, as Justice, to provide for These: That to neglect to do it, would be to deny them that which by the Order of God, and the Nature of the Christian Church, they have a Right to. In short; That we should so think of every Member of Christ's Body,

See Gal. vi.
10.

dy, as of One of the Same *Communion*, and *Fellowship* with our selves: For whose Support we are not only obliged, as in Other Cases, freely to dispense of our Superfluities, but to restrain many times our very Conveniences too; and rather Deny our Selves what we might otherwise innocently allow, than suffer such a One to be greatly in Need.

This is that *Temper* of *Mind*, that *disposition* of *Heart* and *Spirit*, which the *Apostle* here requires of Us towards One Another. And He who is thus *Affected* towards his Brother, and *does Good* to Him accordingly, cannot fail of coming up to the full Heighth of this Duty; and whatsoever else He may chance to want, will be sure to be *Rich in Good Works*. I proceed,

II. To enquire, Upon what *Grounds* this excellent Duty is *founded*: And what great *Obligations* lie upon all of us to fulfil it, as far as our several Circumstances enable us to Do.

And (1st.) As the *Occasion* we have for the Exercise of our *Charity* is Owing to the *Providence of God*, who has in his infinite Wisdom thought fit so to Order this World as to place men in *several States* and *Conditions* in it; so we must Conclude, from this very Order and *Disposition* of Human Affairs, that it was *his Intention* that Those whom He had placed in a *Higher Rank*, and to whom He had given a *Superfluity* of the Good things of this Life, should out of their Abundance provide for Them that *Need*; and have no other Ordinary Means of *Subsisting*, but by the *Charity*, and *Beneficence*, of such Persons.

Had all Men been alike in their Fortunes and Estates, there would either have been no occasion for this Virtue, or no Possibility of exercising of It. They would All have been in so Good a Condition, as not

to Need a Relief; Or All in so Bad a One, as not to have been Able to supply One Anothers Wants. Whereas by dividing the *Riches of this World* into such a Variety of Degrees, as there are Many who want our Assistance, so there are no Fewer who have wherewith-all to Succour and Assist Them. And all this being the Result of the *Divine Providence*, does at once both shew what Every one is Able, and what (for that Reason alone) He ought to account himself Obligated to Do, with relation to this Matter.

To confirm this Remark, let me Observe (2dly) That in consequence of that *Disposition of Things*, of which I am now speaking; it has pleased Almighty God to *implant* such a *Principle* in *All of Us*, as naturally directs Us, without any Instruction, to our *Duty* in this particular.

We have All not only a Similitude to, but a kind of Relation also towards, One Another. We came, Originally, from the same common Parents; We are endued with the same Reason and Faculties; We live in the same World; Are under the Influences of the same Providence; and upon all these accounts are *Equal to One Another* in more, and greater Circumstances, than any we can *differ from One Another* in. Now All these not only Argue for, but by a secret Impulse of Nature dispose Us to, a singular Kindness and Esteem for our Neighbour, upon this very account that *He is a Man*; of the same Kind, and Original, with our Selves; and for whose Support therefore we ought to be Concern'd, as well as for our Own.

And thus far that natural Tendency, and Affection of the Mind, which we call *Humanity*, does of its self dispose us to the Practice of this *Duty*. But the *Principles* of *Reason*, and that *Desire* of *Society* which is implanted in All of Us, will carry Us yet farther.

These

These will shew Us that it is Fitting, nay that it is Expedient, that Men should *Love*, and *Help*, and *Succour* One Another. That every One should *Do to Others*, as he would have Others, in the like Case, do to Him. That upon the Observation of these Principles *Society* is founded, and the Comforts, and even Security, of Life depend. That it must therefore be the Duty of Every One to Act according to these Measures: And that He ought to be accounted an Enemy to Mankind, and to be Outlaw'd from all Society, who refuses to be Governed by Them.

But now what is there in the World more plain, than that if any *Rich Man* were *Himself in want*, He would Desire; and, upon the Grounds I have here mentioned, would think He might justly expect too, that Those who have a Superfluity, and were Able to do it, should *Relieve Him* out of *their Abundance*? And what then ought He in natural Justice, as well as Kindness, to conclude, but that He Himself is *Obliged to Do likewise*.

Let me add to this (3dly) The Consideration of *Interest* its self in this particular: A Motive that seldom fails of perswading Those who are the most Covetous; and which no less than any of the Other Considerations I have already offer'd, requires such a Distribution of Us.

There is no One so *Rich* as not to stand in need of the Help, and Assistance, of the *Poor*. They are These who Work for Him; Who manage his Affairs; improve his Estate? and make his very Riches themselves useful to him. Without their Service the most Wealthy Persons would be oftentimes no less in distress than the Meanest of those whom They Relieve: When Age and Sickness come upon Them; and They can neither Eat, nor Drink, nor Move, but by the Help and Ministry of Those about Them. And what

Acci-

Accidental Kindnesses (especially in *doubtful and dangerous times*) the Greatest, and most Prosperous, may receive from the Love, and Fidelity, of Those whom They have thus made Their Friends; the many Instances we have met with of the Deliverances of such Persons by their Industry, and sometimes with the Hazard of their Own Lives to save Theirs, sufficiently inform Us.

And now that I am mentioning those greater Changes which sometimes happen in States and Kingdoms, I must not forget the Lesser Contingencies of Mens private Fortunes and Estates. I need not say to what Dangers They are Exposed; and how often we see Persons abounding in all the Superfluities of Life, upon a sudden, brought themselves to Want. But sure I am it will very much become Those who are in the Best Circumstances, seriously to think upon This: And when They do so, to Consider withal, should this happen to be their Own Case, How They can expect that any One should Succour, or Assist them in their Wants, who have no Regard to the Necessities of Others.

And thus far the very *Laws of Nature*, and *Principles of Right Reason*, prove our *Obligations* to this Duty. But now (4thly) *The Law of God*, delivered to Us in the *Holy Scriptures*, will carry them still farther. For God as He is the *Supreme Lord* of the *whole World*; who not only by his *Good Providence* dispenses our *Riches* to Us, but still keeps the Last, and Highest Title to them, and can dispose as He pleases of Them; so has He expressly declared our *Superfluities to belong to the Poor*: And has thereby, in effect, given them a Right to all that part of every Man's Estate which He can conveniently spare, and their Wants do evidently require.

Even under the *Law* God not only provided by his
General

General Commands for Them; but Assigned a Certain Portion of every Man's *Field*, and *Vineyard*, to their Use. He Commanded the *Jews* to *Lend readily*, and *without Usury*: Either not to take, or presently to Restore, the *Pledge* of their poor Brother. If He were compell'd by want to *Sell Himself*, or *His Land*, after a Certain time to set *Both* at *Liberty*; not to mention several other *Precepts* of the like kind, by which that People were directed to exercise their *Charity*.

Dent. xv. 10.
Psal. cxii. 10.
& xli. 2.
Prov. xxviii.
 27.

I shall not need to say how highly the *Gospel of Christ* has improved This, as well as many Other Parts of our Duty: I have already sufficiently done that, in the large Explication I before made of the Words of my *Text*. It may suffice to observe, that as *Love*, improved to its utmost Heighth, even That of *Laying down our Lives for our Brethren*, is declared by our Blessed Saviour to be his Greatest, and most Proper Command; *Joh. xiii. 34, 35: A new Commandment give I unto you, that ye Love One Another; as I have Loved you, that ye also Love One Another: By this shall All Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love One to Another*: So with regard to this particular Branch of it, He has represented the whole Enquiry of the future *Judgment*, as turning in a manner upon it: *Mat. xxv. 31. &c. When the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and all the Holy Angels with Him, and shall sit upon the Throne of His Glory: And before Him shall be Gathered All Nations, and He shall separate them One from Another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats; and shall set the Sheep on his Right hand, but the Goats on his left: Then shall He say to Those on his Right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. For I was an Hungred, and ye gave me Meat; I was Thirsty, and ye gave me*
 I Drink;

Drink; *I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; Naked, and ye Cloathed me; I was Sick, and ye Visited me; I was in Prison, and ye came unto me;—Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto One of the least of These my Brethren, ye have done it unto Me.*

It would be in vain for me, after this, to offer any other Considerations to shew, what great *Obligations* our *Saviour Christ* has laid upon Us for the *Exercise* of this kind of *Charity*. As nothing can be more encouraging than what I have now mentioned, so neither need any thing more be added to increase the force of it. And therefore taking it for granted that you are by this time sufficiently convinced both of the *General Obligation* incumbent upon *All Christians* to Give, and of the particular Concern which *Those who are Rich in this World* have, to give *largely and bountifully* to the *Poor*; I go on,

III. And Lastly; To propose some *Rules* to you for the better *Direction* of your *Charity*: That so this *Virtue* which in its self is so *Excellent*, may be render'd yet more *Valuable*, by Your *Wise and Prudent discharge* of it.

And because this brings home my Discourse to the particular *Design*, and *Occasion* of it, it will be needful for me to proceed the more distinctly in the treating of this part of it. To which end, I will

1st. Propose some *General Rules* to you for the *Direction* of your *Charity*: And

2^{dly}. Will shew, How *Those Rules* do concur in an especial manner to recommend that *particular kind of Charity*, which I am now, with all affectionate Earnestness, to exhort you unto.

1st. As to the *former* of these; The *General Rules* by which we ought to *Direct* our *Charity*, in order to a *Wise and Prudent Distribution* of it, They are chiefly these Four. (1st) That

(1st.) That that *Charity* ought to be esteemed the *Best*, and *most Useful*, which is the *most lasting*; And not only relieves the *present Necessities* of the Person to whom it is Given, but will withal be likely to keep him from falling under any more want for the time to Come.

He who gives a Man Money to maintain Himself and his Family for a Week, or a Month, does certainly very well: But if that Money would have procured him such an *Employment*, or have put him in such a *Way*, that by the Means thereof, and his Own Industry thereupon, they might Both have been supported for many Years; it cannot be doubted but that such an Application of it would have been more *Adviseable*, and in the Consequence have proved of more *real Benefit* to the Person, and Family, to whom it was dispensed. In like manner; He who instead of giving an *Alms* to a *poor Child*, binds him out Apprentice to some Honest and Profitable Trade, whereby He may for Seven, or more Years, be kept for his Work, and learn his Trade; and by the Knowledge thereof may afterwards be enabled, not only to maintain Himself, but to support a Father or Mother, or some other indigent Relation; must be Confessed to have done a much *Greater Act of Charity*, than if He had paid for keeping Him a Year in Idleness, and so had left him to Starve all the rest of his Life.

(2dly) That *Charity* which at the same time that it supplies a Man's *present Wants*, does also provide for his *Future Happiness*; and extends to the *Soul*, as well as to the *Body*; must be accounted a much *Greater*, and *more Excellent Charity*, than such as extends to the *Body* only; and looks no farther than this *present, short, and miserable Life*. And therefore He who instead of *Relieving* a Dissolute, Sturdy, Lazy Beggar, sets Him to Work in some Honest and Useful way; Or, if he refuses that,

C

sends

sends Him to a *House of Correction*, where He shall be forced to Work; and thereby delivers Him not only from his Idle Course of Life, which is its self sinful, but from all those other Vices and Temptations which are wont to accompany such a Course; does without Controversie exercise a better, and more profitable *Charity*, than if He had relieved Him in any Other, tho' to Himself a more chargeable, Way.

(3dly) That *Charity* which not only supplies the *Private Wants* of the *Poor*, but will be likely, at the same time, to promote the *Publick Good*, is to be prefer'd to such a *Charity* as reaches no farther than to the Person who receives it; nor brings any Good to Any besides Him who is immediately relieved thereby.

And this again shews the great Benefit of *Setting* the *Poor to Work* beyond any Other Way of Relieving Them: Because that by this means, they will not only be freed from their *Own Wants*, but will be render'd *Profitable* to their *Country*; which will Gain by their Labour, and be Enriched by Those who, in any Other Way of *Charity*, would be only a Burden and an Oppression to it.

To all which let me add (4thly) That that *Charity* which tends to *promote* the *Glory of God*, and the *Publick Interests of Religion*, must be allow'd not only to be more Excellent than such as *terminates* upon the *Poor alone*; but to be of all Others the *Highest*, and *most Perfect Kind of Charity*; as aiming at two of the main *Ends* for which we Live in this World, the *Honour of our Maker*, and the *Common Good of our Fellow-Creatures*. And therefore They who not only *set Poor Children to work*, and Teach them how to Get their Living, but withal provide for their *Instruction in Matters of Religion*, and breed them up to a *Vertuous*, and *Pious*, as well as an *Industrious Course of Life*; must be confess'd to have carry'd this Duty to the utmost pitch that it is ordinarily

dinarily capable of; and to have taken the best Method to render their *Charity* Acceptable to God, and Profitable to Those who are thus Educated, and Instructed, by the Help of it.

These I conceive are, in General, those Measures by which we should chiefly endeavour to *Do Good*. Let us see

2dly. Whether These *Rules* will not Every One of them concur, in an especial manner, to Recommend that *Particular Charity*, which I am now concern'd with all affectionate Earnestness to Exhort you to.

The Charity I mean, is That which hath been already so Often proposed to you, and (to your Praise let me speak it) never without a singular Encouragement from you; of *Feeding, Cloathing, and Breeding up, a great number of poor Children in the Principles of Piety and Religion; and to the Knowledge of all such things as may qualifie them to live hereafter in the World, to the Glory of God; the Credit of their Benefactors; the Good of their Country; and their own Comfort and Advantage.*

How far this *kind of Charity* has, by the Blessing of God, extended its self in a very few Years; What *Numbers of Children* of Both Sexes have been taken into it; And to what distance from these Cities of *London and Westminster* (the Center where it first began) it has diffused its self not only into the *farthest Parts of this Kingdom*, but even into *Foreign Countries*; I shall not need to say. But sure if there be any *One Kind of Charity* that may deserve to be Preferr'd to *All Others*; if in so excellent a Grace as this, we may be allow'd to make Comparisons, and say that what we give in This Way, is more Acceptable to God, and more Profitable to Mankind, than what is Given in Another; This is that Way in which we may Hope, upon all accounts, to *Do the most Good*; and expect the *largest Returns* both of *Publick, and Private Blessings*, from our *Beneficence*.

For to examine it more particularly by the *Rules* before laid down.

(1st) What *Charity* can be more *Lasting*, more *Extensive*, than This? Which is design'd first to Qualifie *Poor Children* for Business; and then, at a competent Age, to provide some suitable Business or Employment for Them.

This not only breaks the *Habit* of *Idleness* betimes, and accustoms them to *Diligence* and *Industry*; but puts a *New Heart*, and a *New Spirit* into Them. It enlarges their Minds by the Knowledge of what They are taught at the present; and enables them farther to improve these first Instructions, by their Own Care, and Application, afterwards. It disposes Them to Love, as well as obliges Them to Pursue, a Regular and Useful Course of Life; makes Them ambitious of being somewhat above what They were born to in the World: And when they come to be placed out to some honest Trade or Employment, it prompts them so to behave Themselves in it, that when their Apprenticeship shall be ended, They may Live Comfortably, and even Reputably, by it.

How different is the State of such *Children* from Theirs who have not had the benefit of the like Education? Who have Learnt nothing that is Good; Who can neither Read, nor Write; Who have no Trade, no Employment to live by? But on the contrary, by an Habitual Course of Idleness, are so corrupted in their very Minds, that they neither care for, nor Desire Any. Who chuse rather to Beg than to Work; and would if not Starve, yet Steal; or commit any Other the vilest Sin, rather than settle Themselves to any Honest Business for the Supply of Their Necessities.

And yet this is the difference between *These Two*: The One by your *Charity* to Them when *Children*, grow up to be Upright, Useful, and Industrious *Men* and *Women*; Are enabled to provide for Themselves by their Own Care and Labour: The Others, for want of such an Education, become Lazy and Dissolute, Vicious and Debauched; always Begging, and always Poor; Ignorant of their Duty to God, and Useless Members, or rather Burdens, of the Common-Wealth.

But there is much more to be Consider'd in this Matter than This: Such untutor'd Persons are not only, as we have seen, utterly unqualified for any Useful Business in *this Life*; but,

(2dly.)

(2dly.) Are, for the most part, in a much worse Condition with respect to the *Other*. Their Laziness, and their Poverty, naturally prompt Them to take Wicked Courses: And having not any Competent Knowledge of, or Concern for, their Duty, they pursue them without Remorse; and neither regard the Censure of Man, nor consider the Judgment of God against them for their Evil-Doings.

This is Their Unhappiness; let me add, and even the Scandal and Reproach of the Society of which we are Members. That Persons should be suffer'd to grow up in a *Christian Kingdom* as Barbarous, and Unsensible of Religion, as if They had been Born in a *Pagan Country*: As little acquainted with either the Knowledge, or Practice of their Duty, as Those who never heard of *Christ*, or his *Gospel*.

O! How much Happier are Those, who through your kind Assistance enjoy the Benefit of a Holy and Vertuous Education? Who are not only well Instructed in what they ought to Do, but are Accustomed to Fulfil it. And by being kept to School, and obliged to a Useful Way of spending their Time, are deliver'd at Once both from the Temptations, and Sins, which the Others for want hereof do too often fall into. Certainly that *Charity* cannot but be most pleasing to God, which at the same time that it Relieves the *Body*, provides for the *Soul* likewise: And not only frees Those who Partake of it from the Necessities of the present Life, but, in good measure, secures them from the Hazard of Eternal Misery, and Damnation, in That which is to Come.

How likely this *Charity* may be (3dly) to *Promote* the *Publick Good*, I shall need offer very little to Convince You. Every One knows how much the Wealth, the Strength, the Reputation, of any Society is advanced by the Labour and Diligence, the Cunning and Skilfulness of Those who are Members of it. When therefore, through your Beneficence, Multitudes both of Heads and Hands shall be added to the Improvement of the Trade, and Manufactures, of our Country; which would otherwise have been either altogether Idle and Useless, or, it may be, would have been employ'd to the Detriment of it; What can be more evident than that this must, in time, turn considerably to its Advantage; and bespeak your Charity to be as much for the *Publick Good*, as for the

the Welfare and Benefit of those *particular Persons* who have the Advantage of it.

And yet there is still Another, and a Higher *Consideration* than all These, to Recommend *This Sort of Charity*, and that is (4thly) From the Influence it may probably have to *Reform our Vices*; and make Us both a *Wiser*, and *Better sort of People* than We Now Are, or probably should ever have been, by any Other Means.

How far that unhappy Decay not only of Christian Piety, but even of Moral Honesty and Sobriety, which is but too apparent among Us, has been owing to the Neglect of these sort of Persons, I shall not pretend to determine. Thus much is evident, that as our first Education has a mighty Influence upon all the following part of our Lives, so it must needs be a great Misfortune for Children to fall into the hands of Ignorant, and Careless, but much more of Vicious, and Irreligious Servants; such as have no sense, nor Knowledge of their Duty; or, it may be, are engaged in an opposite Course of Vice, and Profaneness: From the *One* of which They can Learn no Good; from the *Other* they May, and I fear, very often Do, learn much Evil.

There are, I believe, but few Families among Us, which are not too sensible of what I am now speaking: That have not more or less suffer'd upon their Own, or their Childrens account, by the want of Justice, Sobriety, and Religion, in those about Them. And surely then it cannot but be a matter of great Concern, both for the Glory of God, and our Own Interest, to begin the Work of Reformation there, where we cannot but be sensible it is very much wanted; and may be of the utmost Importance to us. And this must be done not when such Persons are grown up, (for then 'tis commonly too late either to Instruct, or Reclaim Them;) but whilst they are *Children*. They must be season'd with Good Principles, and be accusom'd to a Good Life betimes; and then we may Hope they will also serve their *Masters* with Diligence, and Fidelity; not with Eye-service; but out of Conscience to their Duty, when they Grow Older.

Here therefore is another, and a very forcible Argument it is, for the *present Charity*: Not only to fit these *poor Children* by Reading, Writing, and Casting of Account, to be more Useful

Useful when they come to Business; but by an Honest, Sober, and Religious Education, to dispose them to Labour and Diligence: To be Faithful to their Trust; Just in all their Dealings; Careful of what is Committed to Them; Innocent and Useful in their Conversation; Pious towards God; and of Good Example to All with whom They have to do.

By these means *Thousands* who already begin to be *thus Instructed*, instead of having no Knowledge, no Principles, no Religion, will be brought both to Understand and to Fulfil their Duty. They will not only be rescued out of the Jaws of the Devil Themselves, but will probably become the happy Instruments of Reclaiming many Others. And, by all this, God's Name will be Glorified; A Sense and Practice of Religion will be propagated; Some stop will be put to Profaneness and Immorality: And who can tell but that, by the Blessing of God, the *Reformation* begun with These may Go on to all the Other Degrees of Men amongst Us; and render us yet a Happy Nation, a peculiar People, Zealous of Good Works.

And now, if there are so many Arguments, as you have heard, to recommend the Exercise of such a *Charity* as this in the *General*; I may venture to say that you of *this Parish* in *Particular*, ought to be more than Ordinarily Bountiful in your Encouragement of it.

In other places these *poor Children* are only *Taught*, or at the most *Clothed*; Here they are moreover, *Lodged*, *Fed*, and *Maintained*: And by that means, the Good Instructions they receive at *School*, are not effaced, by the ill Examples and Conversation, they would too often meet with at *Home*.

This is certainly a Great Advantage, but it brings a Heavy Burden along with it. In the most plentiful times it is computed at *Eight Hundred*; Under the present Scarcity, the Charge of it will hardly be defray'd for a *Thousand Pounds* a Year. The *Number* thus Instructed, and provided for by you, is very Great: No less than a *Hundred and Fifteen Boys* and *Girls*; And of these, within about *Eleven Years* that this *Charity* has been carried on, above *one hundred* have been placed out to some Good and Useful Employments; who would Otherwise have been at this time Rambling about the Streets; with Nothing, or what is worse than Nothing, to Do.

In other Places this *Charity* is managed only by a *Voluntary Society* of Well-disposed Persons: It is your (almost Singular) Advantage, that this Work is here carried on by a *Corporation* establish'd by Her Majesty's *Letters Patents*; and enabled thereby to receive any Gifts, or Bequests that shall be made to it, to perpetuate the *Good Work* to all Posterity.

How well what has been already given by you has been managed; as no better Argument can be offer'd, so I shall not need to mention any other, than to desire you to consider from what *small Beginnings* this *Charity* has, in a very few Years, risen up to that *Glorious Height* in which it now stands.

This is an *Observation* that ought to be made not only for the greater Encouragement of Your Liberality, but to the Honour of those *Worthy Persons* who have been intrusted with this *Affair*. It at once both demonstrates the Prudence, and Fidelity, of Those who manage this Good Work; and commends your Beneficence, who have so plentifully contributed towards the Support of it.

Only, my Brethren, *be not weary in well-doing*; but as you here plainly see the Happy Fruits of this *Charity* before your Eyes, so let That induce you, beyond all other Perswasives, to Go on, and Abound in it more and more. The Design is certainly Useful; 'tis Pious; 'tis Excellent: Oh! let it not fail for want of a suitable Encouragement; but as ever you Hope for a Blessing from God upon your own Children and Families, shew some regard to the Necessities of Those, who cannot otherwise provide for the Good Education of Theirs.

And may *that God who ministreth Seed to the Sower, multiply the Seed which ye shall sow, and increase the fruits of your Righteousness!* That, if it be his Will, you may reap the Benefits of it a Hundred fold now in this present time, and in the World to come may attain Life Everlasting;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord; To whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, now, and for ever. Amen.

F I N I S.

ry
(
on
ed
de

en
not
ler
ew
ds.
for
the
his
de-
uds
to-

you
our
to
cer-
fail
ope
mi-
an-

ulti-
your
ene-
the

ber,
over.